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ORIGIN SS-15

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 ISO-00 SSO-00 CCO-00 /028 R

66011

DRAFTED BY S/S-S:BTWADDELL:MDJ

APPROVED BY S/S-S:BTWADDELL

S/S-O:SESTEINER

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O 102206Z DEC 76

FM SECSTATE WASHDC

TO AMEMBASSY BONN IMMEDIATE

C O N F I D E N T I A L STATE 301039

FOL RPT SECTO 32048 ACTION SECSTATE USBERLIN BERLIN MOSCOW
PARIS LONDON NATO 9 DEC QUOTE

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTO 32048

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PGOV PFOR GW GE UR

SUBJ: DECEMBER 1976 QUADRIpartite MEETING ON BERLIN

AND GERMANY: FRG-SOVIET RELATIONS

1. SUMMARY

AT SENIOR LEVEL MEETING DEC. 8 FRG FONOFF POLITICAL
DIRECTOR VAN WELL DESCRIBED FRG AS SEEKING TO MAKE
A NEW BEGINNING IN ITS RELATIONS WITH USSR. FRG
INTENDED TO AVOID CONFRONTATION AND HOPED THAT BOTH
SIDES WOULD EXERCISE RESTRAINT IN THE COMING MONTHS.
HE LISTED THREE MINOR FAVORABLE ACTIONS BY THE USSR
WHICH WERE DIFFICULT TO ASSESS BUT WERE GOOD SIGNS.
VAN WELL LEFT IMPRESSION THAT BREZHNEV VISIT WOULD
TAKE PLACE AFTER CHANCELLOR SCHMIDT HAS SEEN HIS
WESTERN COLLEAGUES AND THAT FRG WOULD NOT INSIST
THAT THE SOVIETS CONCLUDE ANY OF THE OUTSTANDING
THREE TREATIES AS A CONDITION FOR THE VISIT.BECAUSE
OF PRESS PLAY ABOUT DIFFERENCES ON BERLIN ISSUES
WITHIN THE COALITION AND WITH THE ALLIES, THE FRG
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WAS ESPECIALLY ANXIOUS TO PROCEED ON THE BASIS OF

THE COMMON POSITION DEVELOPED WITH THE ALLIES IN THE
BONN GROUP STUDY OF THE REPRESENTATION OF INTERESTS OF
BERLIN ABROAD. END SUMMARY

2. AT SENIOR LEVEL MEETING ON BERLIN AND GERMANY,
FRG FONOFF POLITICAL DIRECTOR VAN WELL SAID THAT BONN
IS MOVING SLOWLY ON FRG/USSR RELATIONS WITH COALITION
TALKS TAKING PRECEDENCE OVER PREPARATIONS FOR THE
BREZHNEV VISIT. VAN WELL SAID THAT CHANCELLOR SCHMIDT
HAD MADE CLEAR THAT HE WANTED TO SEE HIS WESTERN
COLLEAGUES AND ESPECIALLY PRESIDENT-ELECT CARTER BEFORE
HE SAW BREZHNEV. GERMANS HAD MENTIONED BREZHNEV
VISIT TO GROMYKO IN NEW YORK WHO HAD REPLIED ONLY THAT
MEETING WOULD HAVE TO BE CAREFULLY PREPARED BUT THAT
SOVIETS DID NOT YET HAVE SPECIFIC VIEWS. VAN WELL
REMARKED PARENTHETICALLY THAT USSR AND GDR WERE SHOWING
KEEN INTEREST IN FORTHCOMING FRG GOVERNMENT DECLARATION
BUT THEY WOULD FIND THAT THAT DECLARATION WILL BREAK
LITTLE NEW GROUND.

3. VAN WELL SAID FRG/USSR TRADE IS DEVELOPING WELL,
ALTHOUGH FOR FIRST TIME SOVIETS HAD INJECTED A BERLIN
ISSUE INTO TRADE WHEN THEY REFUSED TO HEAR A
PRESENTATION ON THE GENERAL ECONOMIC SITUATION BY
BERLIN PROFESSOR LAHOSKY AT THE MEETING OF THE
FRG/USSR JOINT ECONOMIC COMMISSION. THERE ARE NO
NEW DEVELOPMENTS IN THE TRADE FIELD AND NO TALKS, FOR
EXAMPLE, ON TREATIES.

4. PRINCIPAL FRG EFFORT IS NOW TO MAKE A NEW
BEGINNING IN FRG/USSR RELATIONS. THERE WERE SOME
MINOR DEVELOPMENTS IN RECENT WEEKS WHICH, THOUGH
THEY WERE NOT NECESSARILY IMPORTANT, SEEM TO INDICATE
A SLIGHT FLEXIBILITY ON THE PART OF THE SOVIETS;
FOR EXAMPLE, THE AUSTRIANS HAD AGREED TO CONTINUE TO
USE "LAND BERLIN" IN THE BERLIN CLAUSE OF PENDING
BILATERAL TREATIES AND TO GIVE AN EXPLANATION --
WORKED OUT WITH THE FRG -- TO THE PARLIAMENT. THEY
HAD SHOWN THE STATEMENT TO THE SOVIETS, WHO SAID IT
WAS NOT ALL THEY HAD HOPED FOR BUT THAT THEY
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REALIZED THE AUSTRIANS HAD DONE THE BEST THEY COULD.
EARLIER BONDARENKO HAD GONE TO VIENNA AND TAKEN A
VERY TOUGH LINE WITH THE AUSTRIANS.

ANOTHER RECENT EXAMPLE WAS THE VISIT OF
PRESIDENT SCHEEL TO THE SOVIET TRADE EXHIBITION IN
BERLIN. BONN HAD LAID CONDITIONS FOR THE VISIT:
NEITHER AMBASSADOR TO THE GDR ABRASIMOV NOR

WEST BERLIN CONGEN BYKOV WERE TO BE ON HAND FOR THE VISIT. THE SOVIETS HAD ACCEPTED BONN'S CONDITIONS AND HAD RECEIVED PRESIDENT SCHEEL PROPERLY..

ANOTHER INCIDENT HAD OCCURRED IN MOSCOW WHERE A SOVIET OFFICIAL HAD INSISTED THAT TWO WEST BERLIN FIRMS COULD NOT DISPLAY THEIR GOODS IN THE SAME HALL AS THE FRG FIRMS PLANNING TO PARTICIPATE IN A TRADE FAIR IN EARLY 1977. THE GERMANS HAD PROTESTED. THE SOVIETS HAD SIMPLY DROPPED THEIR DEMAND, WITH THE FOREIGN MINISTRY SAYING THAT THE OFFICIAL WHO HAD MADE IT WAS NOT WELL INFORMED, AND THAT IN ANY CASE THE MINISTRY COULD NOT CONTACT HIM BECAUSE HE WAS "SICK."

5. VAN WELL SAID THAT FRG WANTED TO AVOID UNNECESSARY CONFRONTATION WITH SOVIETS. THEY HOPED THAT FRG/USSR RELATIONS COULD IMPROVE ON THE BASIS OF MUTUAL EXAMPLE AND WITHOUT QUADRIpartite CONSULTATIONS, WHICH THE FRG DID NOT WANT AND WHICH HE ASSUMED THE THREE ALLIES DID NOT WANT. THE ONLY REAL PROBLEM BETWEEN THEM REMAINED BERLIN. THE FRG WANTED TO DEAL WITH THE QUESTION OF THE INCLUSION OF BERLIN IN TREATIES ON THE BASIS OF A COMMON POSITION. THIS IS WHY THE FRG ATTACHED SO MUCH IMPORTANCE TO THE BONN GROUP'S STUDY ON THE FRG REPRESENTATION OF THE INTERESTS OF BERLIN ABROAD. ASKED BY HIBBERT WHETHER HE MIGHT CONCLUDE THAT FRG PRESSURE FOR SPEED IN CONCLUDING THE STUDY WAS CONNECTED NOT WITH THE BREZHNEV VISIT BUT WITH COALITION TALKS, VAN WELL RESPONDED THAT THE STUDY WAS IMPORTANT IN AND OF ITSELF. THE FRG WAS SERIOUSLY CONCERNED ABOUT PRESS REPORTS INDICATING DIFFERENCES ON BERLIN ISSUES WITHIN THE COALITION AND WITH THE ALLIES. THE SOVIETS WERE VERY INTERESTED IN CONFIDENTIAL

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SUCH REPORTS. THEREFORE, THE FRG WISHED TO BE ABLE TO POINT TO AN AGREED QUADRIpartite POSITION IN ITS HANDLING OF THE REPRESENTATION ISSUE. ALSO IT WAS CLEAR THAT, IMMEDIATELY AFTER FORMATION OF THE NEW GOVERNMENT, THE FONOFF WOULD BE ASKED TO DEVELOP PROPOSALS AND CONCEPTS FOR RELATIONS WITH THE SOVIET UNION. IT WOULD LIKE TO DO THAT ON THE BASIS OF A COMMON APPROACH WITH ALLIES.

6. WITH RESPECT TO THE BRESHNEV VISIT, THE FRG DID NOT EXPECT THAT THE VISIT WOULD BREAK THE DEADLOCK OVER THE THREE TREATIES SO LONG STALLED OVER THE BERLIN ISSUE. IF PROGRESS COULD BE MADE ON ONE OR TWO OF THEM, SO MUCH THE BETTER. IF NOT, THE FRG WOULD WISH TO SAY THAT THE VISIT HAD RESULTED IN

A CLEARER UNDERSTANDING OF ISSUES BETWEEN THE FRG
AND THE USSR. VAN WELL EMPHASIZED THAT THIS
DESCRIPTION OF THE FRG POSITION WAS NOT FOR PUBLIC
CONSUMPTION. THE FRG CANNOT SAY PUBLICLY THAT
IT DOES NOT EXPECT RESOLUTION OF THE TREATY PROBLEMS
DURING THE BREZHNEV VISIT.KISSINGER

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: SECTO, FOREIGN RELATIONS, BERLIN QUADRIpartite MATTERS, MEETING REPORTS
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 10 DEC 1976
Decaption Date: 01 JAN 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: KelleyW0
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1976STATE301039
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: S:BTWADDELL:MDJ
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: GS
Errors: N/A
Film Number: D760457-0151
From: STATE
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1976/newtext/t19761252/aaaabtbb.tel
Line Count: 177
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Office: ORIGIN SS
Original Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 4
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: n/a
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: KelleyW0
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 26 APR 2004
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <26 APR 2004 by BoyleJA>; APPROVED <02 AUG 2004 by KelleyW0>
Review Markings:

Margaret P. Grafeld
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
04 MAY 2006

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: DECEMBER 1976 QUADRIpartite MEETING ON BERLIN AND GERMANY: FRG-SOVIET RELATIONS
TAGS: PGOV, PFOR, GE, GC, UR, (VAN WELL)
To: BONN
Type: TE
Markings: Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 04 MAY 2006